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Index
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issue

The Anatomy of Public Relations in Washington <i>Robert L. L. McCormick</i>	1
Getting A Job in PR <i>Edwin B. Stern</i>	8
Understanding the Creative Process <i>Alton Ketchum</i>	14
Community Relations Is Community Responsibility <i>Wayne L. Hodges</i>	18
Scanning the Professional Journals.....	24
Hints for the Part-Time Speech Writer <i>Charles D. Brown</i>	26
Book Reviews.....	32

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*The
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Review
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THE ANATOMY OF

Public Relations In Washington

By ROBERT L. L. MCCORMICK ♦

Typical questions asked Washington public relations practitioners include:

- "Are you lobbyists?"
- "Can you get me in to see Navy Ordnance about my self-chasing torpedo?"
- "How about getting the Tariff Commission to increase the duty on ham chunks? Those Dutch are murdering me."

These questions and ones like them reflect a general ignorance about the whole field of public relations. Generally speaking, Washington public relations practitioners are neither lobbyists, experts in military procurement, nor attorneys who plead clients' cases before Federal regulatory commissions.

Public relations practitioners elsewhere are often unaware of the specialized and exact nature of Washington practice.

Given this confusion in numerous minds, an examination of the various groups representing industry in Washington may afford a reasonable starting point. There are six identifiable groups and the work of all of them impinges on public relations:

*66 advertising agencies*¹—These, plus some 100 public relations representatives of local companies, provide the normal advertising and promotional services found elsewhere. Few concern themselves with national issues or with the Washington Press Corps. Their work is concentrated mainly in the city of Washington.

*5,320 private attorneys*²—Their legal practices entail every form known to man. By far their greatest concentrations lie in highly specialized forms of governmental work. Many undertake important problems which involve national issues.

♦ Robert L. L. McCormick is senior partner of McCormick Associates, Washington, D. C.

¹ Washington Telephone Directory.

² Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory.

*160 manufacturers' agents*³—These perform the necessary function of representing businesses in dealings on Government contracts. While there may still be a few five-percenters hidden among them, the bulk perform a most useful and honorable function, primarily for smaller businesses. Their concern with national issues is light. *550 associations and unions*⁴—Almost all of these are very actively engaged in public relations on behalf of their members. Their concern with national issues is heavy.

*143 public relations advisors*⁵—Less than half of these are organizations or persons who are counsellors and who practice "public relations" as the term is generally understood elsewhere. Among the other so-called "public relations advisors" are publicity agents, freelance writers, and others, some of whom follow highly indeterminate careers. The public relations counsellors operate almost wholly within the framework of national issues and informational programs relating to them.

*Representatives of approximately 400 companies*⁶—These mostly are engineers and procurement experts for industrial companies with Government contracts. Some fifty of these are engaged in public relations on national issues, primarily representing the larger companies.

Cutting a considerable swath across several of these categories comes another more or less identifiable group, the lobbyists. This group of 1,100 persons and organizations⁷—though sometimes maligned through sins of the few—engages quite legitimately in influencing the passage or defeat of Federal legislation. Most registrants within this category consist of association executives and lawyers.

This article concerns itself with the public relations category only. In particular, it covers those organizations and persons in general public relations practice, and those who perform public relations for associations or larger companies. Their work is heavily laden with the informational problems that national issues create. The article is only incidentally concerned with lawyers, lobbyists, advertising agencies, or local industry. It says what these public relations professionals do, and wherein their activities are unique.

The activities of these public relations practitioners are unlike those of their fellows elsewhere, because only Washington operations revolve around two prime facts:

- *Public opinion affects every decision of the Federal Government.*

³ Washington Telephone Directory. ⁴ Washington Board of Trade. ⁵ Washington Telephone Directory. ⁶ Secretary of U.S. Senate. ⁷ Membership list, National Security Industrial Association.

1966

pr | 3

- *The Federal Government, more than any other organization, molds public opinion.*

Activities of these professionals are unique. Their lives are lived in Washington, where more news is made and heard than in any other city in America—or the world.

Washington plays the key role in transmitting our nation's daily news fare. Traffic statistics on major wire service trunk lines make this clear:

<i>News Origination Point</i>	<i>Percentage of National Trunk Line Use</i>
Washington.....	40%
New York.....	14%
New York (foreign cables).....	26%
Bureaus in other cities (from 50 to 70 day by day).....	20%
	<hr/> 100%

Hundreds of other distribution channels supplement these trunk lines. All together they compose the most highly developed news gathering and processing mechanism in the world. The number of correspondents entitled to use the Senate and House Press Galleries shows how remarkably widespread Washington coverage is:

	<i>Corre- spondents</i>	<i>News Outlets Represented</i>
Newspapers.....	850	700
Periodicals.....	285	110
Radio/TV Stations and Networks.....	143	44
News Photo Services.....	151	21

No other capital in the world has such an intensity of news coverage.

Washington public relations practitioners deal each day with the most complex news source in the world, the Government of the United States.

The Executive

The largest single Washington news source is the Federal Government's Executive Branch—annually costing \$69 billion, employing 2.3 million civilians and some 3 million military, and having 2,000 separate bureaus. It is also the world's largest information gatherer.

The Executive Branch daily listens to and reports on tens of thousands of items, including countless topics of interest to our business community. Some are broad-gauged, such as taxes. Most are more precise, reflecting the fact that hundreds of separate bureaus deal with specific business activities: 43 in foreign trade, 60 in manufacturing, 41 in labor relations, 62 in transportation, to cite but a few. Every single enterprise in the land has several bureaus interested in what it does, and making news affecting its operations.

The Congress

Then there is Congress, the most knowledgeable and articulate legislative body in the world, which is Washington's second largest source of news. The 84th Congress' formal proceedings alone covered 25,290 closely printed three-column pages in the *Congressional Record*; and in addition to the 37 million words in these proceedings, there are an additional 13,097 pages and 21 million words in the "Appendix."

Statistics on activities of the 84th Congress further show the scope of its operations. The average sessions of each House consumed 228 days, or 1,148 hours. This Congress—

Operated:	52 Committees
Filed:	1,520 Senate Committee reports
	1,328 House Committee reports
Enacted:	45 internal revenue laws
	39 appropriations laws
	191 laws affecting business
	1,034 substantive laws (total)
	893 private bills
	1,927 laws (total)

Behind these actions lie hundreds of thousands of pages of printed hearings—4,953 pages on one tariff bill, 1,444 pages on another, 7,718 pages on the Defense Department's 1957 appropriations and 1,344 pages on the 1956 Social Security Act Amendments, to take a few examples. Within Congress' labyrinthine structure, countless actions affected business. Many made news not reported in the general press; most reflected information funneled in from sources outside Washington.

Basic Techniques

Three of the principal objectives of most Washington public relations activities are unique in that they are directed toward:

Persuading the Federal Government to take a position favorable to the association's or client's viewpoint. Selected informational media

are employed for this purpose.

Anticipating just what action the Government will take. Informational measures can thereby be planned in advance.

Executing an informational program as soon as the Government's decision is made known. Such a program can support or oppose the Government's position.

Successful operations in this milieu call for unique experience:

In Interpreting Issues . . . Insuring public impact from explanations of Federal problems requires more than "knowing your way around Washington." Experienced judgment in analysis and interpretation must be added. Bringing home to the public the significance of complicated issues such as taxes, tariffs, and anti-trust actions is basic to shaping the outcome of these issues. Long, single-spaced, legal-sized statements on technical subjects find scant Washington rewards.

In Timing . . . Critical timing questions can make or break a Washington public relations endeavor. For instance: when to make a statement, when to hold a special event, how to obtain an early position on a witness list, how to release rebuttals fast, ways of avoiding competition with events which can dominate the news. (An obvious example of the latter is a Presidential press conference.)

In Handling Competitive News . . . Hand-in-hand with timing goes analysis of competitive stories—for their impact. Effective reaction or rebuttal depends on this. An opposition story can be shared if an official report is obtained 24 hours ahead of time; a release at the news bureaus three hours after the event is usually a waste of money.

Fundamental to all techniques are good working relationships with officials and with the press corps. These can only be based on mutual confidence and respect.

Two Case Studies

Operating in the broad Washington frame work, public relations assignments are highly varied, of which the following are examples:

1. *The Tariff Issue—1955-56: A Broad Public Relations Assignment.* Since 1934, the United States had reduced tariffs progressively. Our trade barriers had become the lowest of any major trading nation. This fact was not generally recognized by the public. The effect of further tariff reductions on our defense potential was arousing serious concern in industrial quarters.

The group's public relations assets and liabilities were first analyzed by the public relations consultants. A broad educational program was de-

veloped. Seminars were held to bring the issues to industries affected. Informational tools were produced: reports on the issues, ranging from popularized to scholarly presentations; advertisements; articles; brochures; posters; and booklets. Proposals were made for their effective use. In part at least, this caused a definite shift of public sentiment. The 1956 Democratic platform clearly demanded protection for domestic industry, the first time in 131 years.

2. *The "Communist" Hearings — 1952-56: Public Relations on a Specific Problem.* Several outstanding organizations found their reputations in jeopardy when inadvertently drawn into this controversial matter. In effect, they were being "hit by stray bullets."

The facts were first analyzed by the public relations experts, at the Un-American Activities Committee and elsewhere. Just how serious was the client's real situation? What was the public or community reaction? How much injury to the organization's name could be expected? Finally a course of action was proposed. In one case, a factual dossier was prepared for newspapers and community leaders. In another, watchful silence was advised; and the storm blew over. In a third, a full statement before a Congressional Committee was advised. In all cases, a minute-to-minute scrutiny of hearings and transcripts was maintained.

Public Relations and the Legal Profession in Washington

The two case studies on tariffs and subversion offer illustrations of the inter-relationship of the legal and public relations professions in Washington activities.

On the tariff issue, there are certain services that attorneys do not perform. For example, they do not conduct educational seminars, prepare posters and flyers, conduct press conferences, and write detailed brochures. Nor do they make proposals for making such activities effective. On the other hand, public relations consultants do not purport to know all the intricacies of the tariff laws. While they review legislation from a PR viewpoint, attorneys do the drafting. While they may assist in preparing Congressional testimony, they usually do not take full responsibility for drafting statements. Often the public relations practitioners must check with the attorneys on questions of accuracy. In most instances the two services are complementary.

The same is true on subversive cases. While both may work together in preparing a statement to a Congressional Committee, the lawyer's primary concern is with the protection of his client in matters such as alleged violations of the law and possible libel actions. The task of the public rela-

tions man lies in such matters as assessing press and community reaction, and preparing materials for newspapers and community leaders. Both must maintain a careful scrutiny on hearings for their legal or public relations implications.

While there is some overlap between the two, it is not as great as might appear. The principal difference is that the legal profession directs itself towards laws, regulations, adversary proceedings and the like, and its consideration of public impact is necessarily ancillary.

On the other hand, the public relations practitioner is almost wholly concerned with the public impact. The public relations man designs concepts which affect public opinion. While he must have comprehension of the law and maintain high standards of accuracy, his main objective is the broader and more generalized one which is settled in the "court of public opinion."

Insofar as Washington public relations is concerned, some of the more obvious differences between the two professions are summarized in the following tabulation:

<i>Service</i>	<i>Lawyers</i>	<i>Public Relations</i>
Represent clients in adversary proceedings	Yes	No
Draft legislation	Yes	No
Help prepare Congressional testimony	Yes	Yes
Counsel clients on over-all strategy	Yes	Yes
Conduct a current reporting service	In Part	Yes
Publicize statements and testimony	No	Yes
Conduct press conferences	No	Yes
Gear statements and representations to a national educational campaign	No	Yes
Pinpoint educational programs in key local areas	No	Yes

This is Washington public relations as we who practice it know it. Every case is different but the principles applied are often the same.

Based on these principles, professional public relations practice in Washington is becoming a unique specialty within the profession's broader boundaries.

Washington public relations will never become a science, because of the variegated human elements involved, but it is more and more being accepted as a unique application of specialized professional principles—a form of practice different from that found elsewhere. ●

TECHNICAL SKILLS ARE NOT ENOUGH . . .

Getting a Job in PR

By EDWIN B. STERN♦

WHAT are the qualities for a successful career in public relations? What are employers looking for? Is there any established set of standards which you can use in getting a PR job?

To answer these questions we must recognize two trends in the hiring of PR personnel today.

The first is that employers are concerned not only with the skills and knowledge of the applicant, but with personality. The second trend is toward specialization, for the public relations field is now too broad for any one person to master all facets.

To plot a successful career in public relations you must understand the various divisions of PR employers, and then examine the personnel patterns within each one.

There are five basic divisions of PR employers:

1. Corporate PR.
2. PR counsels.
3. Product publicity departments in advertising and PR agencies.
4. Trade associations, nonprofit, and fund-raising organizations.
5. One, two, and three man organizations of public relations/publicity/press agents.

Each of these sectors makes its own peculiar demands of technical ability and experience. And, too, each sector has — admitting the usual exceptions — its own set of personality requirements and emotional specifications.

It is these factors — personality and emotional structure — that determine in large measure the eventual success of a PR man.

If the pure mental abilities of any individual PR man could be distilled and presented to an employer separately like John's head was pre-

♦ Edwin B. Stern heads his own agency in New York specializing in job placement of public relations executives.

sented by Salome to King Herod, the presentation would be meaningless to a hiring executive.

Resumes do accomplish something of this distillation process and they indicate to some extent an individual's potential fit into the jig-saw puzzle of the employing organization.

An account executive from one of the big-name public relations agencies, where volume of publicity is an essential, would rarely fit into a giant corporation spot.

A typical fast-paced resort publicity man would not normally be happy within the Cunard or U.S. Lines public relations department.

If on a single day the Associated Press was to receive a release from the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and another from one of the Louis Wolfson enterprises, the two probably would be equally competently written. But the internal corporate problems and the interpersonal relationships faced daily by the two writers would be dramatically divergent.

Or take the not entirely hypothetical case of Miss M, a leading fashion publicist, an individualist who steamrollers her way over any minor or major obstacles in her path to getting the clients she wants and then to getting the right publicity for them. She's eminently successful, her clients adore her, and she's on the very closest of terms with those press contacts which she considers important. But Miss M would have difficulty acclimating herself to an executive niche within a typical major corporation. For Miss M puts leadership ahead of acquiescence, progress ahead of security, and achievement ahead of compatibility.

Limits of Adaptability

Some people, precious few, have ambivalent, all-purpose personalities that can successfully fit almost anywhere.

But most humans have definite limitations on their adaptability.

Some are nine to fivers like The Man in Grey Flannel.

Some have never learned how to disagree without being disagreeable. Yet these may be the very brains which can spot a hot syndicate feature at eleven paces and write it ready for publication overnight.

A few weeks ago Agency A and Agency B were looking for a heavy industry PR account executive with trade paper experience. Theoretically, the same man could fill both spots. Certainly both agencies would have reacted positively to the same resume.

But having been called upon before by both agencies to find them new personnel, I had to recognize certain below-the-surface requirements of each.

Agency A prefers a man who is 70% personality-contact with 30% knowledge and ability. Agency B's preferences are just the opposite.

Resumes, references, testing? The human equation—will Mr. X fit into Mr. Y's staff?—can still only be evaluated by another human. And then, far from infallibly.

Corporation Requirements

Among the major blue-chip corporations there are, fortunately for the personnel man, some fairly similar concepts.

If there's any one word that can be stretched to synthesize their definition it's "conformity"—typically American face, clothes that blend into any montage, and orthodox patterns of thinking and talking.

Eccentricity, even when accompanied by brilliance, gets stopped at the corporate front door.

Aggressiveness and anxieties must be camouflaged even if Miltowns have to be resorted to for maintaining that completely relaxed poise.

One corporation personnel man says that he looks for men who will get along with his company associates 75% of the time.

Another corporate personnel director, possibly oversimplifying, said to me the other day: "I can tell our kind of man the very moment he steps into my office."

Corporations are in a sense large families with daily Thanksgiving reunion dinner gatherings. Relatives who take more than their share of the stuffing or who insist upon holding up the dinner while they have another drink are not corporate material.

Where does the Horatio Alger aggressiveness fit into corporations?

The word "corporation" itself is ambiguous for there are established, rigidly structured corporations and there are corporations peopled with overtly dynamic personalities.

Most of the oil and utility corporations, for example, fit into the former group with no place for Horatio Algers. The corporate personnel problem is to run a happy ship, an executive team, not an aggregation of stars.

The blue-chip corporate man is middle personality between the spineless, ambitionless white-collared beachcomber and the round-the-clock staccato of the Louis Wolfson and Robert L. Young empire builders.

Employment Opportunities

And since these established blue-chip corporations have the large staffs, here is where the greater number of employment possibilities exist.

One of the frequent questions asked by younger men in the \$7,500 to \$12,000 brackets is "Can a PR man move into a corporation without prior corporate experience?" If he has the corporate personality and growth potential, a corporation will seriously consider him. However, fund-raising and political backgrounds are a distinct liability.

How does a man tell if he possesses this mystical indefinable corporate blending of aggressiveness, passivity, integrity, and submissiveness?

All that he can do to find out is to try to join a corporation.

If he's looking for a spot between \$5,000 and \$10,000 he'll either have a new connection inside of six months, or he should forget the whole idea. For corporations today are literally hungry for executive team candidates who are well-trained public relations men.

This must be taken as a generality based on my own twenty-one years in the field of public relations practice and personnel placement. A very major corporation recently hired a new PR man without a day of big business experience at \$12,000. There wasn't a line on his resume corresponding to their specifications but the several heads of the company shared a susceptibility for this man's rather unique personality. I had been trying for about eleven months to place him. The moment I heard about the opening at this corporation, I had a violent hunch the man was finally set. For by dumb coincidence five years ago I had met the president and his family socially and knew of their taste in people.

But episodes like this are exceptional.

The PR Agencies

Turning now to the personality demands of major PR agencies, here "characters" are more often tolerated. But they'll have to be toned down on the surface for the ever present need for client-acceptable personality is uppermost. An agency is an agency and a client is a client and a seller-buyer relationship exists eternally.

Most agencies face a variation of the department store buyer's competitive need: "Beat Yesterday." At the agencies it is the incessant beat of the client's query: "What did you do for me last month?"

To meet this, the crack and sparkle of creativity in thinking, writing, and doing is essential. Yet it will seldom be purchased in personnel at the price of outright flamboyancy, arrogance, or obvious neuroses.

Trying to split the components of "technical ability and experience" is also a finicky assignment.

However, an analysis of the many hundreds of PR men who have been placed in new positions through my office shows that 1) 94% are

basically writers and 2) 77% had working newspaper, wire service, or trade magazine experience.

Of course a good writer is not necessarily a good PR man. But in ninety-nine out of a hundred positions a PR man can't get very far unless he is a writer.

And he'll be a far better PR man with reportorial training in learning how to put a story together logically, coherently, and briefly.

For example, a plant PR man earning \$7,500 to \$10,000 may spend a good deal of his time "mending fences" in town, fraternizing with the community's leaders, and being active in local Rotary. But writing the company publications and local news is usually his primary responsibility.

Hints for the Beginner

Public relations is the art and science of deciding upon a sound policy and then letting the public know about it. Many recent college graduates today expect to inaugurate business careers at the "deciding" level without spending any time interning in the communicating phase. A surgeon must complete a medical internship and a graduate lawyer must serve a clerkship. So a PR man, to build a sound foundation, should spend his first professional years writing. There are always exceptions. A man in charge of the public relations of a \$75,000,000 corporation is not a writer and never worked on a newspaper. Yet he's one of the outstanding PR men in the country.

In addition to the precocious "policy-makers" there's another regrettably misguided group. They are the non-writers who "know all the newspaper men." Many companies and agencies do include in their specifications that they'd like a man who knows the press. But normally this is less important than his ability to find a story, write a story, edit a story, sell it to management or the client, etc.

There are also very few openings for PR men whose sole claim to a salary is their ability in "meeting people." Yes, public relations is the winning of friends and influencing people but surface inter-personal skill is no substitute for the working tools and knowledges.

Other Needs for Success

Aside from writing, what other backgrounds contribute to success in public relations?

1. The broadest possible education in the liberal arts. (Notwithstanding, just last week one of America's top twenty corporations told me they will hire no one without a degree in journalism!)
2. A continuing exposure to broadening influences and especially an up-to-date intimacy with business and finance. PR men operate on a

management level as part of sales, production, personnel recruiting, advertising, and merchandising. Knowing the sisters-in-law of all twenty-eight Broadway columnists isn't going to impress the appliance sales manager who wants PR advice and counsel from you on his new policy of hiring department store buyers as salesmen.

3. The ability to work with your associates or clients who frequently may offer dignified acquiescence or possibly bloody combat to the entire concept of public relations. Public relations suffers from the same lack of universal acceptance and frequent suspicion that psychiatry did until the second World War.

All of which means that a successful executive in the field must not only know his field technically, but he must also be able to present his case to those about him convincingly, cordially, and courageously. ●



THE COMPLETE PR MAN

Hale Nelson, Vice President for PR of the Illinois Bell Telephone Company and Chairman of PRSA's Education Committee, conducted a survey recently among practitioners as to the proper college preparation for public relations. He put together some of the recommendations he received and came up with the following composite of requirements for the PR student:

"Know economics, political science, sociology, world history, international affairs, finance, cultural anthropology . . . naturally some humanities, certainly marketing and industrial relations . . . gallop through the present literature on PR to know that it exists . . . study social sciences, English, journalism, art, a minimum of one foreign language, psychology, radio, television, photography . . . join the college newspaper . . . take business administration, public speaking, advertising, business law, Latin, Greek, logic, ethics, religion, chemistry, physics, debate, mathematics, publication production, motion picture production . . . travel . . . get a master's degree. You can't know too much.

"But above all learn humility."

PATRON SAINT OF PR

New recognition of the field of public relations has been given by the Roman Catholic Church in the recent naming of St. Bernardine of Siena as the "patron and protector of publicity agents and public relations specialists." An eloquent Franciscan preacher, St. Bernardine lived from 1380 to 1444.

PR IN THE PERIODICALS

"How Companies Run Their PR," *Tide*, December 28, 1956, page 21.

"How to Write a Press Release," by Will Williams, Publicity Director, California State Chamber of Commerce, *Western Advertising*, November, 1956, page 41.

"How to House a Conference," *Management Methods*, November, 1956, page 77.

"Public Relations of Utility Metering," by Joseph S. Rosapepe, Director of Public Relations, Case Institute of Technology, *Public Utilities Fortnightly*, November 22, 1956, page 832.

HOW AN IDEA IS BORN . . .

Understanding THE CREATIVE PROCESS

by ALTON KETCHUM ♦

THOSE of us who work in the field of mass communication live in a framework of imminence and urgency.

We are asked to produce ideas of high quality on which large sums may be spent and what is more, we are expected to find those ideas and get them into the works in a few days or a couple of weeks.

Creativity under pressure imposes its own special requirements. The communicator must have prepared himself in advance to be a successful instrument of creation. Nothing comes out of a man that was not in him.

Also, the successful communicator understands the process of creation. He knows how to speed the process, avoid road blocks, and take shortcuts.

An understanding of the creative process will suggest ways in which you can become a more efficient creator of effective communications. The process of creation—stating with simple insight just the right message for the purpose—is obviously not a simple one. But ideation can be examined like any other process. Once understood, it can be conditioned, directed and stimulated.

In most cases, the process follows a well-defined route. There are usually four steps: *preparation, frustration, illumination, and verification.*

Preparation takes the longest. And the creative process actually begins when the first facts are gathered.

Everybody has his own methods of accumulating background for this phase. Mine involves the practice of *serendipity*.

Now serendipity is the finding of agreeable things not sought for. It is a word coined by Horace Walpole in 1754. The three Princes of Ser-

♦Alton Ketchum is Vice-President and Creative Group Head, McCann-Erickson, Inc., New York advertising agency.

endip, in their travels, were always discovering by chance or by sagacity, things they did not seek.

A serendipitist treasures such items as the fact that Mount Everest is 29,002 feet high; that the first Mikado of Japan was Jimmu; and aspirin was invented by an Alsatian named Gerhardt in 1853. He doesn't actually try to remember these odd bits; it just happens. Serendipitists are great collectors, too. I have started at one time or the other to collect books in a dozen categories, such as travel, the sea, old dictionaries, the Civil War, economics, P. T. Barnum, policing, caricatures, symbolism, Indian captivities, and so on. Also collections of old maps and prints, marine paintings, Greek and Roman coins, West African sculpture, guns, antique magazines and newspapers, and historic documents.

Maybe all this collecting implies a psychological vacuum somewhere; I don't know. Maybe it's an escape. Maybe it's a way of living in all lands and times at will.

But it certainly does help to cover a lot of territory when the heat is on, and if one can remember what string to pull, it often enables the practitioner of the art to come up in the nick of time with just the material needed.

Perception and Apperception

Psychology tells us that getting ideas is a process of *perception*—the storing up of impressions in our ten billion brain cells—and then of *apperception*, in which we combine two or more of these impressions.

We do this by *association*. It seems that impressions of a feather flock together.

When the driving need for an idea appears, we run over our impressions. It is like swift fingers skipping through a card catalogue. We sort and sift the information, cutting here, fitting there, patching one into the other in the search for new relationships. A different pattern of arrangement may suggest a whole new approach.

The roles reversed . . . the upside down . . . the off-beat . . . the switcheroo.

At this stage one copywriter I know engages in a mental housecleaning. He sets down on a big layout pad every word, phrase, or picture that comes to mind. Quotations, non-sequiturs, words printable and unprintable. Anything, no matter how crazy or disjointed. The result is a little like James Joyce's "Ulysses"; his stream of consciousness meanders across the pad in scrawls and hieroglyphics, and in the process some amazing mental scenery is revealed.

Having tried every angle and combination he can think of, the ideator is usually so confused and obfuscated that he enters a period of profound despondency. All is gloom; no light or possibility of a solution appears in any quarter.

At this junction one topflight copy man turns from the typewriter to a set of trapdrums which he plays furiously. Others pace the floor until the mood wears off. Some head for the neighborhood bar. Actually the best thing to do is to go to bed, relax and forget the whole thing—if you can. You can't always do it—you'll find yourself making notes and layouts on envelopes, paper napkins, even matchbooks.

But most of us turn the job over to the subconscious. And while we rest, it will go right on working. In other words, we can often think a lot better asleep than we can while awake.

The Birth of an Idea

After this period of frustration there comes, if it is ever coming, the *illumination*. Somewhere, somehow, a fateful hand throws a switch across those impressions, and they all flicker and flame into a single mental spectacular.

And thus a new idea is born.

Once that big switch has been thrown, things really begin to happen. At this point Archimedes conceived the idea of displacement of liquids by solids, whereupon he leaped dripping from his tub and ran through the streets of the town, shouting "Eureka, I have found it!"

He had immersed himself in his subject.

Similarly, the modern ideator is possessed by his creation. Like some disembodied spirit, he may be thrust irresistibly forward on the crest of a mighty wave. I had the same sensation once, trying to ride a surfboard at Waikiki. Needless to say, I fell off. And that often happens to the bemused ideator. Earth knows no evangelism more fervent than that of the ideator who has just recovered from the first stunning impact of his discovery. He goes hot and cold by turns. He flies in a chariot of gold on the wings of the morning. He speaks with the tongues of men and angels.

Above all, he is called from on high to expose his revelation and await the plaudits of a grateful world. He yearns for its approval, yet experience has taught him to fear the worst. There is always a rift in the lute. So even as he unfolds his masterpiece, he builds his defenses.

By this time he is in a peculiarly tremulous and delicate state, which often causes him to act in a manner quite eccentric. He may bring in his idea with a shy faraway smile, and lay it in your lap like a newborn

lamb. Or he may rush in bristling defiance, daring you to alter so much as a comma.

Most insidious of all is the approach of the veteran ideator who announces his achievement with a kind of loud casualness as something he just dreamed up over the weekend.

The Final Verification

After this emotional storm comes the cold gray dawn. This is the process of *verification*.

Is this idea rational? Is it what the doctor ordered?

Will it be approved and cleared? What suggestions do others have?

Rather than verification, let us call it *co-creation*. In its best form, that is what happens. Sometimes a roomful of kindred spirits can throb in unison and ideate just like a single organism. Occasionally such a group can telescope all the stages of creativity at a single session. That's rare, but it may happen—and when it does, it is mighty exciting to see and be a part of.

At such times it's wonderful how far and how fast you can go if everybody understands everybody else. The main thing is to preserve a positive and dynamic attitude. This means that even as we prove and examine the proposition, we keep an open mind and try to see its merits just as the original ideator did.

This is not easy.

But when it comes off, the big switch may be thrown between as many as half a dozen contact points, firing the circuit through that many individual co-creators, each of whom is willing—from then on—to do or die for the idea.

Sweet are the uses of co-creation, and blessed are those who learn to use it properly. Sometimes of course, it can get out of control, and run wild all over the place, like a greased pig at a Sunday-school picnic.

But if the idea is good in the first place, and if it can be carefully shepherded as it is presented to each of those in a position to decide its fate, you may find yourself at the end of the line with not only a much better idea, but also with a loyal and highly vocal cheering section to help you clear any last hurdles. ●

FURTHER COMMENT:

"May I add a footnote to your story 'Public Relations Education: Where We Stand' by Scott M. Cutlip in your last issue?

"It is stated that a few courses in public relations date back to the mid-1920's. As a matter of possible interest, the writer gave a course in public relations at New York University as early as 1923 . . ."

—Edward L. Bernays, New York

IN BOTH LOCALLY-OWNED
AND BRANCH PLANTS . . .

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IS COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

by WAYNE L. HODGES ♦

IT is axiomatic in community relations that communication is secondary both in chronology and importance to community responsibility.

Perhaps this is one reason for the successful community relations demonstrated by locally owned, one plant companies, even though they don't have professionally staffed, long term programs of communication. This is not to be critical of the many splendid CR programs of branch plants of large corporations. But it suggests that those local companies which envy the CR activities of big companies should understand that bigness has its disadvantages, too.

Local companies often tend to see only the obvious advantages of bigness. It is true that the name of a large national company is a tremendous asset. Because people have heard it repeatedly all their lives, the name is likely to get initial discussion in any layman's conversation about any phase of business or industry. Just because the famous name comes first to mind, people first consider the big company whether they are talking positively about industrial disadvantages and virtues, or negatively about industrial disadvantages and sins. That is why operators of comparative industrial CR surveys find it wise to compensate for this tendency in their evaluations of citizen attitudes toward smaller locally operating companies.

Unless they have friends or relatives working at locally owned companies, newcomers to the labor market, whether from out of town or from the graduating classes of the public schools, are likely to think first of the big company as a place to work. Women's clubs, civic groups, or school teachers on B-I-E Day likewise are apt to think first of the big company as the place to visit.

The CR pros on the big company's local staff devote full time to heightening this advantage with a well organized and publicized speakers

♦Professor Wayne L. Hodges is on the faculty of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University.

bureau and with programs of local publicity, institutional advertising, and "thought-leader" mailings.

Advantages of Local Ownership

But the locally owned company, perhaps with no CR budget other than "contributions" and with the CR function handled on an *ad hoc* basis or as a sideline of the personnel director, has no need really to worry about this competition. The advantage, strangely enough, can be on the side of the smaller, local company.

For one thing, the "first-to-come-to-mind" principle sometimes operates to Big Company's disadvantage. Probably it will get more than its just share of blame for air and/or water pollution. Surveys may rank it high as a company with a poor labor record (while paradoxically it may also rank high as a good place to work).¹

Large corporations want to behave as local companies, and even to be thought of as local companies. The present industrial decentralization trend has inspired more company emphasis on community relations than on any other aspect of PR. Even staff CR specialists at HQ offices are motivated to improve their performance, since their ideas and "aids" now must be sold to autonomous local managements. But plant managements of decentralized companies must accept the fundamental responsibility for the operation's local relationships, and be judged by top corporate management in terms of results. In the long run this will mean better community relations. It is a trend healthy for the decentralized company and healthy for its plant cities.

In the smaller plant city, or in plant cities of companies which do not hire local CR staffs, the "committee system" as used by Ford, General Motors, and Celanese, among others, can stimulate local managements to CR planning and programming. Such committees are effective only to the degree that the plant managers participate in them.

The service kind of business with offices in many cities (communications and insurance companies, railroads, airlines, big brokerage houses, etc.) have the handicap of spreading a relatively small work force over many communities; the result is that community impact is difficult. (In the same way, New York City, and to a degree Chicago, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles, can swallow even large work force operations with hardly a CR tremor.) The salvation of the thin-spread company lies in the fact that it is service oriented, and as such it gets close to the lives of many people. The telephone companies' emphasis upon employee service to customer and community is an example in point. The service company, with no pro-

¹ Cf. Sherrill Cleland, "The Influence of Plant Size on Industrial Relations," Princeton University, 1955. (A study of the Trenton area.)

duction processes to display, also finds itself at a disadvantage in holding open houses and plant tours; Nationwide Insurance uses its excellent collection of Currier and Ives prints as an additional "something to come and see" at its regional office "open houses."

Model CR Programs

Companies with headquarters located in a plant city, e.g., Caterpillar Tractor in Peoria, Eastman Kodak in Rochester, Pitney-Bowes in Stamford, Corning Glass in Corning, among others, supply the best models of CR programs to be found anywhere. The reason is that managements of these companies participate heavily in community affairs; they make the community's problems their problems; and they have the influence, the finances, and the honest interest to do something about them. As national corporations, too, they know the value of good communications, and hire top-notch professionals to do the job for them locally as well as nationally.

Every locally operating concern, however small and whether a branch or locally owned, can have good community reputation if it works at it. Caterpillar's formal program (newspaper, radio and TV contacts, participation in civic activities, community discussion groups, assistance to local program chairmen, direct mailings, plant visits, and contributions) is not as important or as fruitful of friends as is its "odds and ends" division, as CR Manager Fred Jolly calls it. These sometimes unplanned, improvised and generally inexpensive opportunities to earn good will in Peoria are what really count, Mr. Jolly believes. E.g., Caterpillar throws nothing away, but obsolete materials are made available to anyone who has real use for them. School parade floats are pulled by Caterpillar vehicles. Even solicitors of legitimate "nuisance advertising" are given pleasant receptions and sometimes a payment for space.

This may seem like a small-time way to operate CR, but community relations works best in an aura of the intimate. Community relations can't be seemingly big-time, or it ceases to be community relations. This is the real explanation, it seems to me, why some locally owned companies have better community acceptance than branch plants of big companies do.

The Leadership Structure

Management men of local companies more frequently have places in the city's leadership structure, sometimes called the "power structure." The real leaders of industrial cities—the half-dozen to two dozen men who make policy decisions as to priorities among community projects and who mastermind the strategy to achieve them—are predominantly industrialists

with a sprinkling of bankers and corporation lawyers. Both at the apex of the community structure and at the leadership levels below the apex (those who actually carry out the community projects), local company management men outnumber branch managers in most cities.

This phenomenon occurs in part because the local companies are the "in-group," sometimes having social position to augment their financial and industrial positions, sometimes having a corporate tradition over many years of community leadership and responsibility. It occurs in part because branch plant executives consider the wide-flung corporation — rather than any plant city—as the real matrix of their local operation; and because branch plant executives are transient, or are faced with the threat of transiency. In short, branch managements are not as heavily represented in the community leadership structure as they might be, partly by their own default.

The apex of the city's leadership structure has obvious strengths both in matters of local government relations (police and fire protection, taxes and zoning) and in matters of community service (capital drives for hospitals, local education facilities, operation of health and welfare organizations, etc.) These all are as much the concern of branch operations as they are of local companies.

This leadership structure, furthermore, has community communication value. Community leaders sit on boards of local organizations; they are members of many community, business, and social groups. They, plus their associates within these groups, are the "thought leaders," the same people who get mailings sent out by the CR pros on the staffs of big company plant managements.

It seems obvious that being part of the community's "thought-leader" structure is better communication than is mailing of printed materials to members of that structure.

Downward Communication

Downward communication—from the thought leaders to the rest of the city's citizens—is, of course, by no means the whole answer to community communication. Feeding industrial information directly into the lower strata of the community structure, e.g., via barbers, cab drivers, etc., via word-of-mouth communication of employees, and via publicity and institutional advertising, is equally effective. But the downward aspects of communication should not be neglected; and these are most accessible to companies with managements that actively participate in the leadership of their plant cities.

Community Chest and United Fund drives, and drives for capital funds for hospital building, etc., must have the active support of community leaders if they are to succeed. Companies headquartered in the city customarily set the pace for corporate giving. Branch managements, with perhaps only moderately generous headquarters contributions policies, are inclined to be embarrassed or resentful when presidents of local companies preface their solicitations with their own examples of generosity. Smaller companies with assets under a million dollars contribute nationally an average of 1.3 percent of net income before taxes whereas the national average is about .9 percent.

Perhaps the discrepancy in giving between locally-owned companies and branch plants creates more disapproval of branch managements than headquarters staffs realize. It is a disapproval that begins with the leaders of community thought. And, just as "thought-leaders" are cultivated as communicators of favorable information and opinions, so should they be recognized as potential conveyors of unfavorable opinions.

Need for Inter-Company Cooperation

Community relations in a community does have its competitive aspects, particularly in so far as CR affects employee recruiting. But inter-company cooperation must be emphasized over competitive CR if "a good business climate" is to be maintained. A city's "business climate" roughly equals the collected CR programs of all locally operating companies over a period of years.

Good business climate, in its best sense, aims not only at a production-minded labor force, a reasonable tax structure, and adequate police protection; but also it aims at improving the schools, the hospitals, the health and welfare agencies. Cooperative CR to be effective needs an organizational umbrella, a local manufacturers' association, or a broad-gauge chamber of commerce. Such an organization should have as one of its prime functions the encouraging of *all* locally operating companies to promote the three essentials of good community relations:

1. A management deeply interested and willingly active in community affairs on a continuing basis, and a generous (although not necessarily lavish) policy of financial support of worthy community drives.
2. An employee relations program built on management's honest concern for the dignity, security, and happiness of the company's people.
3. A continuing program of adroitly timed community communication between the company and all important segments of the local popu-

lation, and one that concentrates on mutual interests of company and community and not on the company alone.

Because every city differs from all others in its pattern, structure, and needs, a CR-minded local management must become an integral part of its plant community in order to understand it and to work with it intelligently. In this sense a locally owned company has an inherent advantage. But the outside company, if it puts its emphasis on community responsibility, can do equally well. ●



PUBLIC RELATIONS ORGANIZATION

Inside Executives vs. Professional Counselors

INSIDE EXECUTIVES

INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF AFFAIRS. If the inside men are major executives, they possess the necessary information to make competent decisions since they are acquainted with actual policies, procedures, and operating personnel. They are familiar with products, processes, and selling and service problems.

AN EASIER START. A simple, easy start toward care for customer relations can be made if an executive will take responsibility for informing himself and coordinating the matter for his chief who is "too busy" or thinks professional counsel too expensive.

LIMITATIONS ON INSIDERS. The company executives can oppose their chief or associates only to a limited extent, as their livelihoods may be at stake. There is danger of becoming "yes men." It is difficult to reeducate one's superior to new and unfamiliar ideas.

FAMILIARITY TO THE PUBLIC. The name of an identified official of your well-known company may carry considerable weight in a direct appeal to the public.

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

FREEDOM FROM INTERNAL POLITICS. The public relations counselor from an outside firm is free from the internal pressures under which employees must operate.

HIGHLY SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE. He maintains a high professional competence in his field, commanding the respectful attention of his client's executives.

NEUTRAL VIEWPOINT. He can better evaluate situations and proposals from his disinterested and unbiased position and can speak his mind more freely. He can help get a company started in the right direction.

BROADER CONTACTS. He brings a broader base of experience and often has access to information not available to associates of any one firm.

PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENCE. Jealous of his reputation, he will refuse to accept dictation from company executives where expediency may be primary.

LIMITATION ON THE OUTSIDER. Since professionals usually work behind the scenes, their names, if used, have little value in case of a direct appeal to the general public.

—*Business Management Handbook*, Edited by J. K. Lasser,
McGraw-Hill Book Company

scanning

THE PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS

*In past issues the point has been made that often the professional journals in the social sciences contain articles which are useful to PR practitioners. (See "What Do the Social Sciences Have to Offer Public Relations?" an interview with Edward L. Bernays, *pr*, Jan. 1956, and "A Guide to the Professional Journals," Donald W. Krimel, *pr*, April 1956). Because there are so many of these journals it is virtually impossible for the busy practitioner to review regularly even the most useful ones. From time to time, then, Donald W. Krimel describes selected items which may be significant to our readers.*

In this issue Dr. Krimel gives examples of material, containing implications for the public relations field, found in the professional journals of sociology.—ED.

ATTITUDES OF WHITES AND NONWHITES TOWARD EACH OTHER

WARREN BROWN and J. OSCAR ALERS, The City College, New York
Sociology and Social Research, May-June, 1956, Vol. 40, No. 5.

In lower Westchester County, N. Y., the writers supervised the interviewing of 149 white persons, selected as a sample of a described portion of the area's population. As a correlation, they interviewed also 116 nonwhite persons in Riverton, N. Y. Their report includes a brief description of their sampling method; its brevity might relieve some public relations men who happen upon the piece, and irritate others.

Questions asked by the New York sociologists may be instructive, in their form, to the public relations person; the handling of the data, and its interpretation, also may be of interest. The results of the survey, however, in portraying a set of social attitudes on an important topic, probably could be expected to add most to the capacities for judgment and to the sophistication of the public relations person who reads this sociology journal.

Some conclusions taken from the report:

1. All whites interviewed wanted whites and nonwhites to have equal schools; over 75% wanted segregation ended in the schools.
2. A large majority of the whites held the opinion that the intellectual capacity of nonwhites is equal to that of whites.
3. Comparatively few of the whites had known nonwhites personally other than as domestic servants.
4. "The most sensitive spot in the attitude of whites toward nonwhites is in the area of housing." Fear of falling house prices is a major motivation of the whites on this point. Another important one is pride: "Whites would accept nonwhites with less hesitancy if they did not have to make the initial overture."

SOCIAL ORIGINS AND OCCUPATIONAL ADJUSTMENT

DOUGLAS M. MORE, McMurtry, Hamstra & Company, Chicago, Ill.

Social Forces, October, 1956, Vol. 35, No. 1.

Occupation is an important indicator of social status in America. Detailed knowledge of how that fact affects persons, in various situations, can be of value in employee relations work and in public relations generally.

In the study here reported, data were obtained from 1,389 outside salesmen from 26 companies, representing 10 business and/or industrial sectors. Data were collected, for each individual, regarding occupations of father, brothers and sisters, and wife, as well as present and past occupations of the subject, his earnings, and his desired earnings.

Salesmen whose fathers were professionals, proprietors, or managers were considered "downwardly mobile"—or in positions of status lower than the status of the positions their fathers had held. Salesmen whose fathers were clerks, semi-skilled workers, unskilled workers, or service personnel were considered to be, in contrast, "upwardly mobile."

Among tentative findings: "... those who are upwardly mobile from fathers stay on the job longer than the static or downwardly mobile groups." Also, "... the downwardly mobile group aspires to a significantly higher income than the upwardly mobile group. This is in accord with our expectation that persons coming from homes in which a relatively high income was available will desire similarly high incomes for themselves, even though they are failing conspicuously to attain them."

NOTE: *Sociology is "the science which investigates the laws or forces which regulate human society in all its grades. . . ." (Webster's) and thus the term can be construed to include most of the social science field. Narrowly speaking, however, the number of professional journals in sociology proper can be set at about 185, a number indicating a much less extensive periodical literature than is found, for example, in the field of political science.*

About half of the sociology journals are in languages other than English. The following are among English-language journals of particular potential utility to public relations practitioners:

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, a bi-monthly published by University of Chicago Press, 5750 Ellis Ave., Chicago 37, Ill.

AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW, a bi-monthly published by New York University, Washington Square, New York 3, N. Y.

SOCIAL FORCES, a quarterly published for the University of North Carolina Press by the Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, Md.

SOCIAL RESEARCH, a quarterly published by the New School for Social Research, 66 W. 12th St., New York 11, N. Y.

SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH, a bi-monthly published by the University of Southern California, University Park, Los Angeles 7, Calif.

For listings of professional journals in sociology see ULRICH'S PERIODICALS DIRECTORY and the CLASSIFIED LIST OF PERIODICALS FOR THE COLLEGE LIBRARY (pr, July, 1956).

D.W.K.

Hints for the

PART-TIME SPEECH WRITER

By CHARLES D. BROWN ♦

DID your boss ever hand you five yellowing speeches and coo, "You'll hate me for this, but I just got an 'invite' to a very important meeting and I'm speaking one week from today. See what you can do while I'm out of town."

And did you ever mutter, "Listen, old man, speeches are created, not written from the remains of their ancestors. Give me time to think and I'll come up with a draft. Remember, sir, what you say in public may be the most important thing you do all week. Next time you pull this, you're looking for another PR man."

Of course not.

For if you're going to write speeches today, you've got to do them catch-as-catch can. It's nicer to research in leisure; yet some very persuasive copy has rolled hot from the machine in between every thing else in this clock-happy, work-a-day world.

Ours is the talkiest age in history. The pre-schoolers get up and make talks. Every group has meetings and conventions and 'important messages.' Your newspaper, radio, and TV set is proof sufficient that more speeches are being delivered today than ever before. Hence, with this competition, it behooves the public relations man (who isn't a full time speech writer) to have enough know-how to get his principal through a creditable public speech—one that does him some good.

The question is, "How?" There are shelves of books on the art of speechwriting. I do not dismiss them, but wager that many very effective speeches are written by men and women who never saw one. I take it this is a clue to the essentially creative quality of a good speech. Who taught

♦ Charles D. Brown is Secretary of the Publicity Committee of the Regular Common Carrier Conference, American Trucking Associations, Inc.

Mark Twain to write and deliver sell-out public lectures? What about FDR? In any event, you do not have time to "bone up" on speech writing if the boss has a fire-alarm call.

Making no pretensions whatsoever of being a professional speech writer, but fortified by ten years of experience at writing-to-be-spoken, I offer my own working observations in the hope they may be useful to others.

Step One: Analyze

Where, oh where, to begin? You begin by analyzing the speech situation. Where and when is the talk? Before whom? How big the audience? Who will be there? What do they ask you to say? What do you want to say? Is it to your advantage to accept? Any secondary advantages like news coverage, reprints, etc.?

Going back to the point where the boss accepts the invitation, let's consider that. He jumped into it without analyzing, and he has every right to do so. But if you can get him to go through Step One with you before he accepts any speaking engagement, you have done him a great service. Ask him to delay any speech offer for one full day. Make that decision together, whether to speak or not to speak, and you'll stay in harness.

Step Two: Determine Your Objective

Having decided to accept, you must determine the objective of making the speech. A glance back at the presidential campaign will remind us that each location chosen by the candidates and each topic chosen for exposition was directed by a specific objective. Eisenhower went to Peoria for a farm talk. Stevenson talked labor in Detroit.

As you answer each question about the speech situation, you find yourself closer to the objective and begin to feel what you want to say. Never mind writing—time enough for that later. The objective of a speech is often most difficult to agree upon; to determine it requires absolute confidence between the writer and the speaker. I would guess this is the step most often not taken in development of a speech. Very often Mr. Big does not know what his speech objective is. Therefore, the PR writer must somehow dig it out by interview, cajolery, luncheon, or buy a drink or so. Settle on what you want to do in the speech before you move on to the next step. And hold this shocking thought in mind—objectives often shift while a speech is being created. In that case, you write another or rework what you have to fit.

A speech without a clear objective is like a letter without postage. It won't go anywhere.

Step Three: Research the Material

If you correctly understand the conditions surrounding the speech, and are agreed upon the objective, you are already pointing toward the material. Most people make the error of beginning to scratch for material. first; this is where the boss felt he was being helpful in handing you five fully-aged scripts. Backward march him if you can and go through the painful first steps of analyzing and determining the objective.

Everyone knows how to research! Oh, no they don't. It surely doesn't mean going to the books although books can give forth good material. Let me illustrate. One of my Board members accepted a lecture appearance on the subject of "Truck Terminals." He requested a prepared text. Here was a man who had been gathering material on terminals since 1914, and had seen with his own eyes every new terminal development in motor transportation within that period. We sat down for about two hours and talked about terminals. The notes from that conversation, in his own phrasing, gave me the substance for his lecture. No other source could have provided such accurate, personal, and warmly human information all related to the speaker.

Regardless of your familiarity with the subject your research starting position is everything you know of or feel about a subject from the moment you first heard of it. Research can fill the gaps of no-information. But chunks of information are not a speech. You are like the reporter who is told, "Go get the story." Your real task as a speechwriter is to take the factual material and by the process of putting it through your own experience, come out with copy that sounds like it was spoken impromptu, is clear, and says something worth saying to the specific group before you.

I assume that you have some material on hand, that you snatch ideas and clips for your Speech File. If you don't better start now. It's a form of researching and so is buying the 1957 *World Almanac*. Your file will give you back more than you put into it. And remember, you are gathering speech material every time you hear a joke, feel hungry, itch for a raise, or put the kids to bed after a day's work. A good speech may draw from any human experience. The whole world is your reference library.

Good material, incidentally, may even come from people who know nothing at all about your subject. Their state of ignorance may intrigue your listeners. One day Chairman Arpaia of the Interstate Commerce Commission stopped about a dozen persons in front of the Raleigh Hotel in Washington, about a block from the ICC. He was researching the material for a talk, and wanted to know the state of John Q. Public's knowledge

of the oldest of the federal regulatory agencies. He found out in a hurry a vast area of ignorance. Practically no one, not even in the Federal City, knows what the ICC is or does. Incidentally, Commissioner Arpaia got a good opener for a speech out of that sampling.

Researching is often the most adventuresome part of writing a speech. You meet such interesting people! Along the way, don't overlook the standard sources: the authorities, the almanacs, the famous sayings. Consider the gratifying success of the most prolific speechwriters and deliverers in the nation who rely upon a single source book every Sunday of every year, and talk to more people regularly every week than any other group within our society. They have a good source and they stick with it. Not every field is so favored, but you would do well to retain Shakespeare along with the Bible, the golden treasures, poets and philosophers, and even a stray newspaper editorial now and then.

Step Four: Write a Draft

By now you can no longer avoid writing a first draft. No matter how rough it is, go ahead. Get what you have on paper. It can be reworked, and likely will be. Techniques vary as much as writers. The only thing that counts is getting a first draft on paper as quickly as you can.

In the writing, it is helpful to have a "line" or "pitch" on paper or in mind to point you along the way, but don't expect to see the glorious upswing of the ending from the rough terrain of Sentence No. 1. Writing comes one line at a time, another fact you would do well to get across to the Old Man. Composition may be very spurdy, and there may be complete breaks in thought when you sit blankly wondering why, oh why, you ever tried to write a speech. In the end, it will all smooth out.

I hold the making of the speech is in the writing. No matter how fresh your material or how terrific the occasion, you the writer give the speech clodhoppers or dancing slippers in the happy phrases of your writing. Here is where the sweat stands on your forehead. Here is where you earn your money.

In the writing, you must hear the words coming out of someone's mouth. If you can also visualize the situation, you're in. And so loosen up and fling away with the best line of gab that's in you. A speech is intimate—person to person. It really involves only two people. Have at it! Our language is durable and with it you can say anything you have in mind worth saying in public. Read it aloud to yourself, or anyone who will listen. Sample the product.

In speech work, I find it useful to indicate pauses rather than using conventional punctuation. You can't hear a comma, but you can feel it. A pause may be indicated . . . thus. Any device on paper for the speaker that points up the spoken word is worth using.

Step Five: Finalize the Copy

If time permits, let the rough draft cool overnight and go back to it next morning. You may wonder how anything could be so bad.

And so you begin the final step of polishing and refining the thought. I like to try a first or second draft on the speaker who has already agreed to the line. We may change our minds along the way. Whatever is objectionable comes out then, new points may be added, and so on. By all means, speak the lines and have the boss do it if he will.

It is at the finalizing stage that you may decide to tear it up and begin again. This is sometimes the way speeches are written, the same as any creative writing. How do you know? If you don't feel like hugging the Little Critter to you, I'd say, "Toss him out." Only you can decide. It's a lonely business.

At Step Five you also find out how successfully you have caught the tone, temperament, and phrasing of your speaker. No speaker of integrity will use your copy unless it expresses his thought in comfortable sentences. It is our job to make the copy as 'at home' as little brother.

This is not always possible. Writing a radio interview for a Cabinet member, I had no opportunity to know either his views in detail or his way of saying things. However, he managed to go over the copy before air time and made such minor changes as needed. This is quite routine in such situations. The point is, finalize the draft.

In presenting these five steps based upon practical observations in speech work, I am well aware of much that is left out. The academic works on the subject can be very helpful to us, but they can't write the copy for you. You can read about openings, identification with the audience, structure, the uses of repetition, emphasis, and how to make a perfect landing. (See "Speech as a PR Tool" by S. M. Vinocour, *pr*, July 1956.) But I believe the steps outlined in this article will be helpful in your next speech assignment:

1. *Analyze the Speech Situation.*

Find out quickly as much as you can surrounding the occasion including why they ask you to speak.

2. *Determine Your Objective.*

Without this, why spend the time and put forth the effort? At

the rates of your boss plus yours, and the travel expense, it costs real money to turn out a twenty-minute address that anyone will remember two weeks later (or two days). Aim to get your money's worth. Don't confuse your objectives with those of the people who invite the speaker. They may be very dissimilar. Once determined, hew to the objective.

3. *Research the Material.*

Only with a clear objective can you begin intelligently to research for the substance of the speech. Keep building a file all the time. Read speeches made by others in other areas, for they often contain good material already researched. And study some of the master speech writers or speech makers. Winston Churchill, for instance. Read the Sermon on the Mount. Often others in public relations work have material they will gladly give you. I find this true.

In the business world, I think most of the good information is unwritten. It's in motion on two feet locked in the minds of the leading figures. If you can tap it, you have the material.

4. *Write a Draft.*

It's real work, but it has to be done. Don't wait for a committee or the boss to do it for you. You will be disappointed. The making of the speech is in the writing.

5. *Finalize the Copy.*

Go over it word by word and get a reaction from the speaker if you can. Don't leave it for "study" or "we'll take a look at it later on." You haven't written the speech until you and the speaker agree on the final product.

But then stop. Don't do an Adlai and keep fiddling with the phrases up to delivery time. ●



APRA AWARDS COMPETITION AND ANNUAL CONVENTION

Deadline for entries in the APRA Awards Competition for outstanding public relations programs is February 15. Presentation for the awards will be made at the annual convention in Philadelphia April 24, 25, and 26. For details write:

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BOOK REVIEWS



PUBLIC RELATIONS HANDBOOK

By JOHN CAMERON ASPLEY and L. F. VAN HOUTEN, *Editors, The Dartnell Corporation, Chicago.* 1005 pages. \$12.50.

*Reviewed by Willett M. Kempton,
Chairman, Department of Communication,
The American University*

This new "handbook" comes in the size and shape of the old Gideon Bible—including rounded pages with black and gold covers in imitation leather. While its 1000 pages fall short of giving the word to the PR faithful about everything, it is so comprehensive that the biblical format struck this reviewer as not entirely inappropriate.

The handbook contains reminders of old truths, some tried-and-true advice regarding methodology and techniques, stimulating briefs of successful case histories. Its claim to handbook status is bulwarked by a feature unusual in such a book—lists of things such as State Fairs, with dates; historical events around the calendar; a 33-page listing of Business Paper editors. And, of all things, an "abridged list" of 275 PR consultants (10 pages) consisting solely of members of PRSA. There is no reference to APRA, let alone the various specialized groups in the field.

As the Foreword explains, this is one of a series of handbooks dealing with management problems, written by the staff of Dartnell. The editors deny that it is their purpose to "glorify public relations." Purposely or not, they do a gratifying job of patting on the shoulder what they call "The forgotten man of management."

The handbook contains a bibliography of recent literature in the field. This ignores many early contributions of merit, but it is useful and up-to-date. The acknowledgments read like a "Who's Who in PR." The book covers the field most comprehensively. The 47 chapters include such topics as: determining policy and strategy; manuals and bulletins; making the organization public relations conscious; coordination with personnel; dealing with emergencies; staging a successful open house; the public relations executive; planning a long range program; fairs, shows, and conventions; getting a good press; getting photographs used; public service films;

radio and TV publicity; public talks and appearances; external and internal publications; working with schools, colleges, religious youth, civic and service organizations; stockholder relations; the legal aspects of public relations, and many others.

This book should be in every university library, and certainly should be on the shelf of PR practitioners.

CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC RELATIONS: Principles and Cases

By GENE HARLAN and ALAN SCOTT. *Prentice Hall, Inc., New York, N. Y.* 197 pages. \$5.50.

*Reviewed by William H. Epperson, Administrator,
National Foundation Infantile Paralysis, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

The practice of public relations gets concise, down-to-earth treatment by authors Gene Harlan and Alan Scott.

Combining their talents and experience, Harlan and Scott have written one of the best short statements on public relations to be found. In a field whose literature is long on philosophy and skimpy on the how-to-do-it, *Contemporary Public Relations* is clear, specific, and practical. (Harlan is a public relations counsel in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and Scott is associate professor of journalism at the University of Texas.)

The first half of the book deals with principles of the profession. The authors' step-by-step procedure of analyzing a problem in public relations can be of help to all practitioners, new and old.

Perhaps the meatiest portion of the book is a chapter on "Tools and Techniques," which provides excellent checklists. These can be used to make certain that important PR tools are not overlooked.

One technique, commonly neglected, is the speakers bureau. Easy to organize, the speakers bureau is one of the most effective tools in the PR kit. It builds personal prestige for company officials making the speeches, as well as for the company. And, despite all of our progress in communications, the public speech is still one of the more effective means of getting a point of view over to a small group of people.

The "gimmick" approach to public relations may make interesting reading, but a mere listing of stunts can't be of much help, the authors feel. Instead, they concentrate on the standard tools and approaches.

The second half of the book gives 54 actual PR case problems, and invites you to solve them. A mere reading of the problems can broaden your view of PR. Providing the solutions can give you a stimulating busman's holiday.

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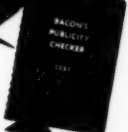
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Power and Morality in a Business Society

By SYLVIA and BENJAMIN SELEKMAN

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"OUR great power baffles us, and we do not know how to turn it into creative expression, both as a nation and as individual citizens. Most of all, incredible as it may seem, America is afraid. Indeed, at times, it seems as if the most powerful people on the face of the earth are suffering from the worst case of jitters known." Benjamin and Sylvia Selekmans probe deeply into this moral dilemma America faces in the exercise of the great power we wield as a nation. While the problem, for Americans at least, is a relatively new one, it is, in terms of human history, as old as time itself.

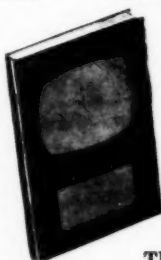
The Selekmans point out that more often than not we fail to exercise our great power with skill or wisdom. We react to it with feelings of either guilt or defensiveness and as a result our posture before the world is often one of belligerent aggressiveness or aimless generosity. Not being able to see the forest for the trees, we are not, as we certainly should be, aware that power is of itself neither moral nor immoral, and that it is only in the exercise of power

that moral questions arise. This applies as much to our day-to-day decisions in business and politics as it does to our activities in the field of foreign affairs.

The authors show that we have, as part of our democratic tradition, the machinery with which to tame our power and use it effectively and skillfully. That is the art of compromise and negotiation. They argue that by continually developing and refining our skill in this art we will come to exercise our power without fear or favor to the enrichment of our country and the cause of peace and freedom throughout the world.

This is a challenging and hopeful book, and one that will be read with profit by those of us who share with the authors a serious and responsible concern for our country in this era of crisis.

Benjamin Selekmans is Kirstein Professor of Labor Relations at the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration. His late wife, Sylvia Kopald Selekmans, was his co-worker on this book and throughout his career.



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